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Letter to Jennie Guiney, 1861 August 21

Patrick Guiney

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Arlington Heights Va.
Aug. 21st 1861

My Dear Jennie:

I have this moment
received your Journal and
Herald containing much en-
tertaining information. But that
little scrawl on the margin of
the Herald, caused my ideas to
awake up, I assure you. I ask
myself whether I had omitted a
single opportunity of writing
to you; and in looking back
over the varied duties which
I have been called upon to per-
form within the last ten days,
I hold myself not guilty of
neglecting to write to my darling.
This is the usual tendency of
my mind. No matter how wrong
I might be, you know, I always

~~held~~ held myself piously sufficient in all things. Don't you remember my failing? Well, perhaps, dear, I ought to have written to you, so that you might have received ^{it} on Saturday evening. How gladly, darling, I would anticipate even your smallest desire, if I were not tossed about so much in this sea of excitement! Indeed, I hardly ^{remember} anything disconnected with my immediate duties, from one day to the other. I wrote to several, I think, the same day on which I wrote to our dear and kind friend Miss Crespy. Now, I do not remember who they are. I mistrust that I sent you a few lines the same day. But if I did not pardon one whom you have often pardoned before -

My dear, dear, Jennie
news has just reached here

that an attack has been made upon our forces a few miles below here - at the Chain Bridge. It may turn out to be a false report, or the matter may be simply a slight skirmish. No matter which it is, we are ordered to fall in, and therefore it is that I must close this conversation with you, which I did intend should not be so brief. A battle will soon be fought here, if it has not already commenced.

Good bye home
and may God protect
you and my child. May
Mary, ever blessed, to whom
I have often appealed but never
in vain, watch over you
both. "To arms!" is ringing
through the camp.
Patrick R. Murray